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order, by a conscientious and skilful jeweller, pearl monograms, too, can be safely worn, and undoubtedly they look very pretty.

Although order is the sovereign law of the decorative arts, and symmetry is its best expression, confusion may also play a useful part in ornament, and even become an equivalent of order itself, for a monogram should be easily, but not *too easily*, deciphered. "A fine disorder is often an effect of Art," says Boileau; and Nature had shown it in a thousand ways before the French writer set down the remark on paper. But it is essential to state that, in this connection as in others, confusion should be balanced by a latent equilibrium and harmony running through all the ornaments composing the monogram. Excess, however, should be carefully avoided: if ornaments require the aid of a magnifying-glass to be clearly seen the eye is fatigued, and no æsthetic feeling is aroused. Without clearness of design the richness of detail is only embarrassing and puzzling; it becomes an encumbrance instead of a decoration. The most sober simplicity should be followed in engraving and cutting letters on small fields like rings, &c.; watches and locket, having larger fields, bear naturally with more complication and confusion; but here, again, we must repeat: "Beware of excess; simplicity is always the greatest source of beauty."

In no other work of Art is it perhaps so necessary to make variety consistent with unity as in monograms. For this reason, the draughtsman, jeweller, &c., should always avoid mingling letters of different styles. It is not uncommon to see emanate from the hands of those who have much to learn, ciphers enclosing in their graceful arms an initial belonging to the formal Roman alphabet, or some of these supporting with stolid masculine uprightness the more bending mediæval. Intermixture of styles in the letters composing a monogram is as ridiculous as it would be to see a man with a Louis XIV. wig covered with the silk hat of our times. An instance of incongruity of this kind is afforded by the so-called "Napoleon's cipher," composed of a Roman N enclosed by a doubled and reversed L in script letters. The French artist made it as a caricature of the taste of that sovereign, as well as of the political medley of good and evil of which his government was composed. But people took it up in earnest, and made it fashionable for a while.

Two more rules should be strictly followed in making a monogram: first, it should be adapted to the object on which it is to appear; and, second, it should agree with the character and sex of the person whose name it is intended to represent. Nothing is more absurd, for instance, than to see on a jewel in the Renaissance style engraved a monogram in old Saxon letters, or on a Japanese object a fancy modern one. This is not art; it is simply mingling the Hebrews with the Samaritans, as they are wont to say in Italy. In everything no ornamental detail should be at variance with the main features of the object whose beauty it is supposed to enhance. Some styles of jewels are scarcely suited to monograms; at any

rate, they should harmonise with the peculiar style of the object on Egyptian *moniles*, for instance, let the monogram nicely approach the hieroglyphic, and so on. It is equally absurd to have the same monogram on objects as widely different as note-paper and a watch or medallion. Let the monogram on the former be simple, made by one or two strokes of the pen, and in imitation of handwriting: let the monogram on jewels rise to a higher standard

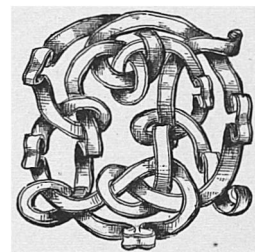


Fig. 48.

of ornamentation. What can be done with a single stroke of the pen is seen in monograms Nos. 40, 41, 44, 45, and particularly by No. 48, which plainly and elegantly gives the letters D E L R.

Not every flower becomes everybody. The device that suits a bishop cannot be appropriated to a young girl; let, therefore, the monogram be in keeping with the sex and character of the person; let it be heavy, severe, and simple, for old and demure people, and be light, gay, and even fanciful, for the young. As regards monograms on jewels even more discrimination is required, particularly if they be formed of stones. In Europe, and especially in Italy and France—certainly the queens of taste—diamonds are scarcely worn by young ladies; and we think the limitation a wise one, for diamonds are too showy to be consistent with the modesty that should always characterise young ladies' attire. If girls were permitted to wear diamonds, by what ornaments would married ladies be distinguished? Let, therefore, the monograms of young ladies on jewels, if stones be called into requisition, be but of pearls and turquoises—the emblems of poetry and purity.

The monogram, when possible, should have a meaning; that is, should be made of such materials as to recall somewhat the name of the person it represents. We have seen a pretty monogram representing a pot of roses formed by an R, the initial for Rose (the Christian name of the young lady), and by a W constituting the form of the vase, and a doubled and reversed P, which elegantly stood for the vase's handles. Another ingeniously represented the name of Hawthorne by means of branches of hawthorn in bloom. Suggestiveness, it should be borne in mind, is one of the greatest attractions Art possesses.

MAURICE MAURIS.

FÊTES AT DÜSSELDORF.



URING a recent visit of the Emperor and Empress of Germany to the neighbourhood of Düsseldorf to witness the autumn manœuvres, their Majesties accepted an invitation from the Art Club of Düsseldorf, known as the "Malkasten," to a grand fête given in their honour. Some years back, it will be remembered, the Düsseldorf Academy of Painting celebrated the fiftieth jubilee of its foundation, and the Malkasten Club—which is a purely artistic body, composed of the students and professors of the Academy, and the many eminent painters living in the town—was intrusted with the organization of a series of fêtes, lasting three days, which will long be remembered on the Rhine for the thoroughly artistic spirit infused into the pageantry of the occasion. Since then the club has stood preëminent in Germany for these displays. Nor is the reputation

gained by the artistic fraternity in this direction to be wondered at if it be borne in mind that a "Malkasten-Fest" is conceived and elaborated with as careful an eye to the correctness of costume in the clothing of its historical processions, as learned an observance of the laws of composition in the arrangement of its tableaux, and as refined a sense of the harmonious blending of masses of colour in its sumptuous decorations, as the eminent artists selected to arrange these difficult matters would bestow upon the elaboration of a fresco or the minutiae of an historical painting. But the fête of this season eclipsed all previous efforts of the club, and for the edification of their imperial guests the painters of Düsseldorf may be congratulated upon having produced an entertainment almost as picturesque and gorgeous in its effect as that memorable masque arranged by the Earl of Leicester for the surprise and amusement of Queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth Castle.